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# INTERVIEW: A chat with Danny Howard ahead of his performance at Creamfields!



**In 2011, you got your big break when winning BBC Radio 1's Superstar DJ competition! If it wasn't for this, where do you think you'd be now?**

I'd still be djing, and I'd probably be putting on events in Blackpool, Liverpool & Manchester with my business partner and best friend Alex. That's how I got into DJing. Someone once told me if you want to start making it you have to either start producing or putting on events, so I just figured that I'd do both. The events took off more than the producing at first. The first event we did we sold out a small club at 500 capacity and now we're doing events in Blackpool, having had the likes of Martin Garrix, Duke Dumont & Hannah Wants playing in the past and selling out 6000 tickets! We've also booked Disclosure, Pete

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credible!

**Now, 1.8 million people tune in to your BBC Radio 1 show, Dance Anthems, every weekend! How does it feel to know that so many people love what you do?**

I hope they love what I do! But yeah it feels amazing. It's such an incredible time slot. When I first started I thought 4-7pm was too early to play dance music but in fact it's the perfect time. It's that period of time on a Saturday when people are already getting geared up for a night out or they're in two minds and usually when they listen to the show that gets them in the mood; which is always good. We also get a lot of people that get in touch with the show & say that were planning on having a quiet night in but now they want to go out as the show's put them in a good party mood. That's exactly what I love about the show.

**If you had to give a favourite Radio 1 DJ to work with, who would it be and why?**

That's an impossible question because I love them all. We're like this massive family. It was weird when I first started working their because I had been a massive fan of Radio 1 for 10 years & I used to listen to Pete & Annie religiously every single week and to then be working with them in the same studio and the same office was quite a surreal and amazing feeling. I'm just so happy to be able to work with them all. Everyone is so down to earth there and they say to never meet your heroes but with Radio 1 everyone is so normal and enthusiastic about putting on great radio shows.

**You're a radio presenter, live DJ and in-house producer, how do you fit it all in?**



working at 6am. Organised chaos is probably the best way to describe it. I think if I stopped I'd just crash. I don't know how I fit it all in, but you've just got to keep going & keep running! I don't mean that in negative way. Every thing I do is so enjoyable that you just want to keep doing it.

**Do you ever get any down time to yourself? When you do, how do you like to spend it?**

I rarely get any down time but I suppose just chilling with my girlfriend – which is very rare at the moment. She actually hates me right now because I haven't seen her for weeks! I go to the gym most days, but I'm always listening to music promos even at the gym. I guess it's my kind of my release. I'm so used to working and I enjoy it so much that after half an hour of watching TV I get bored and want to go make music or listen to music. The only time I see it through is when I go to the cinema, I love the cinema. Or playing football!

**Your Nothing Else Matters brand has hosted big names, Mark Knight, Disclosure and Pete Tong to name just a few! Describe the brand to us...**

The brand has a UK focus on house music & around up and coming DJs/Producers that I think are going to do big things. That mixed with special guests, like the ones you just described – Disclosure, Duke Dumont, Hannah Wants. Also if you look down the line, we're hosting an arena at HD festival in September, we've got people like Disciples, Denney, DJ S.K.T, Max Chapman, Mambo Brothers, 99 Souls & Mr H's as well as special guests Amine Edge & DANCE. So it's a good mixture up and coming UK producers & special guests.



I think it went amazing, I know that I sound slightly biased, but we achieved what we wanted to achieve, which was to support up and coming artists, go back to basics as well, so no head of production – just a dance floor, big sound system, a club & people enjoying good house music! For me personally, it was more of a change because I was going a bit more underground, a bit more housey than what people might have known me for in the last few years and it really worked in terms of that. We also visited a few places off the beaten track that you probably wouldn't normally tour like Hull & Bolton, and people really appreciated that. I think because usually they would have to travel to major cities to go big nights so it was nice to be able to take the big nights to them. As far as the first UK tour went with the brand, I was very happy and can't wait to do the next one.

**Earlier this year, we saw you release the track “Bullet”.**

**How would you describe this track?**

Big room madness – which was very late. I actually finished that track in April 2014 and it was meant to go out that summer, but that summer I really changed what I was playing in the clubs. For reasons like licensing & release schedules it came out a year later, so it was bittersweet for me because I wasn't playing it anymore but the reaction was so great that I had to start playing it again. It was a weird one. I was so happy that people were playing it but at the same time it was a bit of a change of direction for me.

**Do you have anything else in store for the rest of 2015?**



the first festivals I went to and I've got some really good memories, so it's always special to play there. Its Radio 1's 20 year celebrations this year so I'm looking forward to hosting an event there, working with Annie & Pete. I'm also mixing & compiling the Radio 1 Dance Anthems Ibiza album which is a massive honour – that'll be out on July 31st.

### **Playing both Cream Ibiza and Creamfields this summer, how do you tailor your sets towards club nights and festivals? Do you prefer one to the other?**

Both have a different buzz, although because festivals are on a bigger scale it requires bigger tunes. In a club you can go a bit more deep & go in different directions, whereas festivals are pretty much straight up – give the crowd what they want. That gets an amazing reaction, however in a club if you experiment a little bit and you get the same reaction from a tune that you wouldn't expect to then that's also a massive pay off and a great feeling as well. I can't really pick from the two! I suppose because I came from clubs, if I had to pick than I would say clubs, although it's amazing being able to play at both. Cream in Ibiza I suppose is like a festival in itself because the room is so massive & the energy is incredible.

### **You've already played a couple of shows for Cream in Ibiza this summer. How did they go?**

Incredible! Amnesia terrace is one of the places that you take a moment during your set to think how the hell did this happen. It's such an amazing venue, such a legendary brand that's a staple in the Ibiza calendar every single year, so to be involved in



which was such a great vibe and a great occasion as well.

**This year Cream celebrates its 21st anniversary on the White Isle and takes its place as the longest running UK club night on the island. What do you think the secret to their success is?**

Consistency. I think that's the secret to any successful club brand & creating something that people can trust. Cream has always delivered the biggest parties with the best DJs and they've always stayed relevant to their market – they know their market. They don't try to be anything that they're not. You've got a good mixture of DJs – in the main room it's all about big room house & trance, on the terrace it can be anything from the deeper sounds of Mark Knight to Duke Dumont to Eric Prydz. It's a good mixture and that's why they've lead the line for the last 21 years and I think they could do it again for another 21. It's amazing to be a part of.

**You spend a lot of your summer on the Ibiza shores. What is it about this island that attracts you so much?**

I suppose because it's dance music through and through and I always describe it as a raver's paradise because you've got the best clubs in the world with the best DJs playing. People go there for the music & the DJs and that always creates a good vibe in Ibiza. You've got such a variety as well, and then outside of the clubs you've got incredible beaches, amazing restaurants and it's a beautiful island. Everything you could ever want as a dance music head is there and I think that's why I go back year after year.

**Now back to Creamfields... any surprises for us in store?**



est memory from the festival?

So my first year at Radio 1, I joined in April 2012 and I always used to listen to Pete Tong or Judge Jules or Annie do these radio shows from big festivals. I remember asking my executive producer at the time “is there any chance we could do the show from Creamfields this year” thinking they’re obviously going to say no because I’d only been at the station for about a week but they turned around and said “Yeah that’s a great idea, let’s do it.” I remember thinking oh shit – this is actually happening. It was backstage in the guest area and we had everyone there from Example, to Skream & Benga to Annie and Eric Prydz on the show – All these A-list DJ’s coming on every 5 minutes like a revolving door, and I remember thinking what an incredible place and what an amazing experience. That’s my best memory, broadcasting my first Radio 1 live broadcast show at Creamfields.

**If you could collaborate with anyone from the Creamfields 2015 line-up, who would it be and why?**

The Chemical Brothers because I’d like to go to their studios and write down everything that they do and take it for my own productions haha.

Danny Howard will be performing at Creamfields UK on August Bank Holiday weekend and Cream Ibiza @ Amnesia throughout the summer for info and tickets go to <http://www.cream.co.uk/>



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